

Formative Design Research - Ethiopia

Guide to One-to-One and Group Conversations with Adolescent Boys

Overview

This is a guide for conducting youth-participatory design research with adolescent boys for the Adolescents 360 (A360) project. Please note that included in this document are more research methods than we will need during any one conversation. We provide a variety of suggested tools for how critical topics can be explored; each team will have the flexibility to choose which of these methods are most appropriate for the audience they are speaking with. At the end of every day, we will reconvene to discuss insights from the day as well as which methods worked best so that we can learn for the next day.

Introductions

Before beginning any discussion with adolescent boys, please ensure you:

- Go through the necessary consent and assent procedures. Ask his age, so you know which procedure to use.
- Show appreciation for him giving us his time.
- Explain that we are on a learning journey to better understand the lives of boys in his community.
- Remind him that he is the expert, not us. We are simply here to ask questions and learn.
- Remind him that there are no wrong answers. This is about him, his life, and his opinions.
- Encourage him to speak openly and honestly. Remind him again of the privacy and confidentiality of this conversation and that he can stop at any time.
- Remind him that the goal of this conversation is to get his help in developing programs that are going to improve the health and lives of girls and boys throughout his country.

Card Sort

Suggested for conversations with individual boys. This activity requires two researchers – one to facilitate the discussion and one to take notes.

Time Needed: 10-30 minutes

Materials Needed: 12 word cards; 6 blank cards

Step 1: Make sure you have a large, flat surface to work on like a table or even the ground. Lay out the following cards on the surface. Each card will have word or phrase. Place any or all of the following 12 cards out, but keep the “Preventing pregnancy” card behind for later.

Getting married	Earning money	Having friends	Having a girlfriend	Finishing school	Owning nice clothes
Having children	Staying healthy	Owning a phone	Having sex	Going to parties	Preventing pregnancy

Step 2: Ask the boy to put the cards in order from what he believes is most important to least important in his life. Ask him to “think out loud” meaning that he should explain what he is thinking as he

organizes the cards, out loud to you. Remind him that he is welcome to move the cards around as much as he wants; what you care about most is that he explains his thinking. If he says something that is really interesting to you, make sure to probe by asking him questions like “Why do you feel that way?” or “Can you tell me a bit more about that?”

Step 3: Ask him if there are other things that are important to him that we did not have on these cards. Write down what he says on the blank cards and ask him to place them in the order. Make sure to ask him to explain why those things are important to him.

Step 4: Use this activity as a starting point to engage in a deeper conversation with the boy about his hopes, dreams and perception of sexual and reproductive health. Ask some of the following questions, and make sure to probe on each question by asking, “Why do you feel that way?” and “Can you tell me a bit more about that?”

- Of all of these things that you feel are most important to you, which of them do you feel you currently have in your life? For instance, if having friends is very important to you, do you feel that you have good friends?
- Of all of these things that you feel are most important to you, which of them do you feel you don't currently have but wish you did? How do you think you would be able to go about getting them?
- Think about other boys your age in your school or community. Do you think that they would answer similarly or differently to these questions about what is important? Explain your answer.

CONTEXT

This activity requires two researchers – one to facilitate the discussion and one to take notes.

Time Needed: 20-40 minutes

Objectives: Open with a conversation that taps into the perceived value, status and associations related to adolescent girls in the community.

- For those of us who are not from this country or from this area, we'd love for you to help us understand the adolescent girls in your community.
 - Tell us about the different types of adolescent girls in this community.
 - What does it mean to be a 'good girl' in this community? What do those girls have in common?
 - What does it mean not to be a 'good girl'? What do they have in common?
 - Which do you most commonly see here – good girls or bad girls? Why?
 - In this community, what's the typical life for a girl who is, say, 15yo?
 - How is or isn't that different from a typical life of a 15yo boy here?
 - I want to understand if and how boys and girls are regarded differently in this community. Would you say that girls and boys are treated the same? Explain.
 - How are they treated the same?
 - How are they treated differently?
 - Do they have the same opportunities? Why or why not?
 - Do they have the same amount of control of their lives? Why or why not?
 - Do they have the same influence in their families? Why or why not?
 - Are they treated differently in the eyes of the local religion? If so, how?

NOTE to Facilitator: Probe for context – the boys' feelings, perceptions and associations related to girls

- We would now like to understand more about you and your friends use mobile phones and technology
 1. Do you have a mobile phone or ready access to a cell phone?
 2. What type of phone do you have? (Smart or feature / basic)
 3. Do you share the phone with someone else? If you share the phone, who is it with?
 4. What do you use your phone for most?
 5. [If phone is shared]: Imagine you didn't need to share the phone with anyone else. How would that change the way you use the phone?
 6. Do you access social media? If so, what social media do you use and how do you access it?
 7. What do your parents use their phones for the most?
 8. Do your parents check your phone?
 9. Do you take any security measures on your phone? Which?
 10. Do you access the Internet? [IF YES:] what are your most common activities on the Internet?
 11. Do you prefer to chat with your friends in person or via phone?
 12. Are you in any chat groups? [If yes]: which?
 13. Do you make use of apps? Which one?
 14. What is your favorite app and why?
 15. Which apps do you think are lame or not useful?

- 16. When you think about your mobile phone, what is the first thing that comes to your mind? And the second? What else?
- 17. What would be different in your life if you didn't have a phone?
- 18. What is your favorite phone brand (and why)?

NOTE to Facilitator: Probe for how girls value and use technology. For social interactions? For learning? For social status?

TOPIC SPECTRUM

This activity requires two researchers – one to facilitate the discussion and one to take notes.

Time Needed: 15-45 minutes

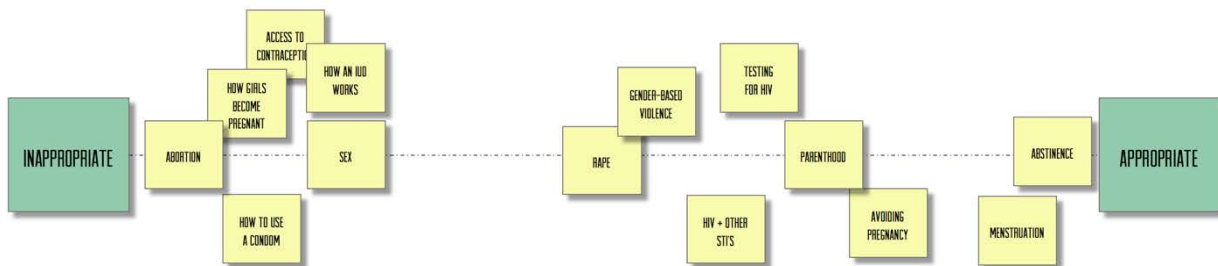
Materials Needed: Stickies, markers

Objectives: Understand boys' perspectives on sources of SRH information. Discuss which topics are appropriate and which should be off limits.

First, ask the boy whether he believes it's appropriate to discuss sexual and reproductive health with **unmarried** adolescent girls. If not, why not? If so, why and which topics does he feel are appropriate to discuss with girls? Then, share with the boy stickies with a different SRH topic noted on each. Ask the participant to add any topics he feels are missing.

MENSTRUATION	HIV + OTHER STI'S	TESTING FOR HIV	SEXUAL ASSAULT	HOW AN IUD WORKS	???
AVOIDING PREGNANCY	ACCESS TO CONTRACEPTION	SEX	ABSTINENCE	HOW TO USE A CONDOM	
PARENTHOOD	HOW GIRLS BECOME PREGNANT	ABORTION	FERTILITY	MARRIAGE	

Once the list is complete, have the boy place each topic on a spectrum from least appropriate to most appropriate topics to be addressed (by no one in particular) with **unmarried** adolescent girls. At this point do *not* address who has the responsibility to address with adolescent girls. Just get a clear read on which should and shouldn't be addressed.



Once the boy has indicated what is and isn't appropriate to discuss with **unmarried** adolescent girls:

- Discuss the ranking with the goal of understanding the logic behind it.
- **IMPORTANT:** Determine the perceived risk in talking to **unmarried** adolescent girls about the least appropriate topics, as well as what makes other topics more appropriate.
- **IMPORTANT:** Figure out what circumstance might move a topic closer to 'appropriate' and acceptable. Determine why.
- Without judgement explain what topics are considered appropriate in other countries. Discuss. Gauge reaction.
- **IMPORTANT:** Discuss how, if at all, his/her opinion changes under different circumstances, like the adolescent is a) already sexually active, b) has already conceived, c) is married.

Values and Health

Suggested for conversations with groups of boys. This activity requires two researchers – one to facilitate the discussion and one to take notes. It is best to conduct this activity in a space where boys can stand up and move around – either indoors or outdoors.

Time Needed: 30-45 minutes

Step 1: Ask participants what they understand about the word “values.” Once they have shared some answers of their own, explain that values help define who we are and how we act by giving worth and importance to certain beliefs, principles or ideas. Values are attitudes or behaviors that individuals believe are good or desirable. Every individual and every culture has values. The purpose of this activity is to learn about what you value.

Step 2: Ask everyone to stand up in the middle of the room or area. Point to one side of the room (or area) and call it “Agree”. Point to the opposite side of the room (or area) and call it “Disagree”. Make sure participants understand.

Step 3: Explain that you will read a statement. Once the statement is read, each person will move to the side that best represents how they feel about the statement. Then you will ask for volunteers to express why they agree or disagree with the statement. If during the discussion a person changes their opinion, they can move to the other side. Remind them that there are no right or wrong answers, and that you encourage them to debate with one another.

Step 4: You can use as many of these statements as you want. If you are getting good conversation and debate out of one of the statements, stick with it. Remember, we are more interested in what the conversation is about and how the participants think and feel, and less interested in what side of the room they move to.

- Girls and boys in my community have equal opportunities to succeed.
- Adults should talk to boys my age about sex.
- Adults should talk to girls my age about sex.
- Girls who use contraception are “dirty”.
- Adults should let adolescents do whatever they want to do
- A woman’s role in life is to bear children and keep her husband happy.
- Sometimes I don’t want to be a boy
- I have someone that I can trust to talk to about sex and sexual health.
- Preventing pregnancy is one thing that can help me succeed in life.
- A girl can refuse sex if she doesn’t want to have it.
- If I need condoms, I know where I can get them.
- Most girls have sex in exchange for money or other material goods.

Step 5: Lead a discussion about the activity using the following discussion questions:

- How did you feel during this activity? What was easy? What was difficult?
- Were you surprised by anything that you heard during the discussions that we had during the activity?
- Do you think that girls in your community would feel similarly or differently to you about these topics?

Trusted Source Bulls-Eye

Suggested for conversations with groups of boys. This activity requires two researchers – one to facilitate the discussion and one to take notes.

Time Needed: 15-45 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Flipchart or poster with the bulls-eye drawing on it
- Sticky notes with the words written on them
- Blank sticky notes

Step 1: Hang up the bulls-eye on a wall or spread it out on a flat surface. Hand out the sticky notes to the participants – one per participant.

Step 2: Explain that this is an exercise to discuss who they most and least trust for information or services about sexual and reproductive health, particularly preventing pregnancy.

Step 3: Ask one participant to read what is on his sticky note. Imagine trying to help a friend get some information. Does he think the person on the sticky note and to say whether he feels this person can be most trusted, somewhat trusted or not trusted to provide sexual and reproductive health information or services. Ask him to explain why he feels that way. Once he is finished explaining, ask others for their opinions. Do they agree with him? Disagree? Encourage them to debate and decide if they want to leave the sticky where it is or move it. You can also write new sticky notes with the same word and place it in multiple places on the bulls-eye if they do not agree.

Step 4: Repeat this exercise until you have gone through all of the sticky notes. Make sure you give all of the boys time to talk and discuss their feelings.

Step 5: Ask the participants whether there are other people that they would like to add to the bulls-eye, for whom they trust going to for sexual and reproductive health information or services. Write those down on sticky notes and stick them on the bulls-eye. Make sure you ask them to explain their answers and continue discussing and debating with one another.

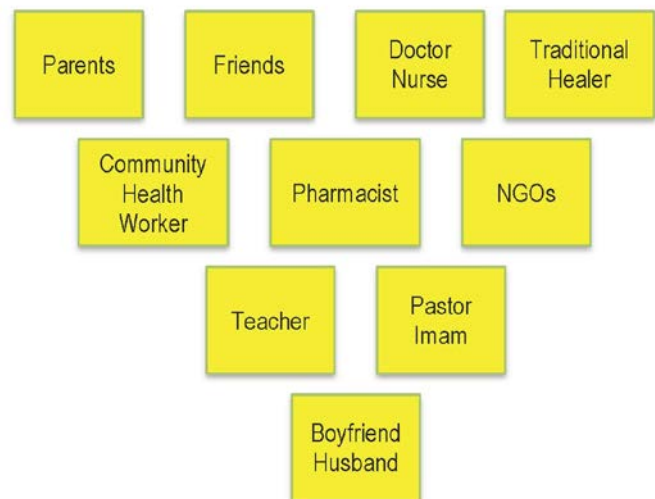
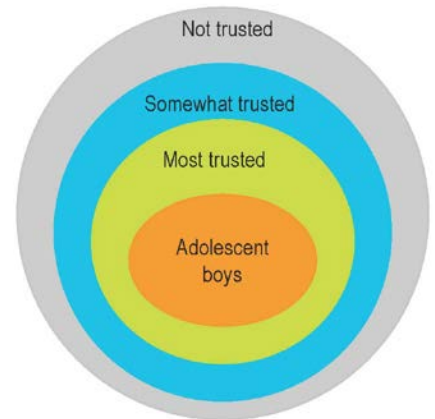


Photo Sorts

Suggested for conversations with individual boys. This activity requires two researchers – one to facilitate the discussion and one to take notes.

Time Needed: 10 – 30 minutes

Materials Needed: 10 photo cards

Step 1: Make sure you have a large, flat surface to work on like a table or even the ground. Lay out the following cards on the surface. Each card will have a word and a photograph of an adolescent boy expressing that word.

Excited	Confused	Sad	Happy	Worried
Annoyed	Frustrated	Hopeless	Scared	Triumphant

Step 2: Make sure that the boy knows what all of the words mean on the cards. Explain that you are going to describe a life event or a state of being for a boy, and he is to pick out the picture that best describes how he feels when he thinks about going through that event in his own life. Explain that it might be an event he has already gone through, or one that he thinks about going through in the future. If he has already gone through it, he should choose the card that best describes his real feelings at that time. If he has not yet gone through it, he should choose the card that best describes how he feels right now when he thinks about that moment in his life.

Step 3: Read out the following events/states one at a time. After each one, give him time to choose the card that best describes his feelings. Tell him that he can pick more than one card, but he needs to explain to you why he has all of the feelings he feels. Ask him to “think out loud” meaning that he should explain what he is thinking as he chooses between the cards, out loud to you. Remind him that he is welcome to change his decision at any time and as often as he wants; what you care about most is that he explains his thinking. If he says something that is really interesting to you, make sure to probe by asking her questions like “Why do you feel that way?” or “Can you tell me a bit more about that?”

- Being somebody’s son
- Being somebody’s brother or close family member
- Going through puberty
- Having a girlfriend
- Having a wife
- Having sex
- Using condoms
- Being male
- Being Ethiopian
- Becoming an adult
- Becoming a father
- Getting a job
- Making decisions for himself about his future
- Getting married
- Talking to a health provider about sexual health
- Graduating from school
- Going to University
- Speaking up for what you believe in

Storytelling

This activity requires two researchers – one to facilitate the discussion and one to take notes.

Time Needed: 30 – 40 minutes

Materials Needed: Stickies, flipchart and markers

OBJECTIVE: To fill in a hypothetical story to determine male perceptions about the support and information that adolescent girls need

Steps for facilitator:

- 1) Begin this session by explaining the method: “I’m going to read to you the beginning of a story about a girl in a community” and that participants will help in filling in their stories with what would happen to them if they were in your community.
- 2) Write the name of the person in the story on a sticky note and paste in on the center of the board.
- 3) People will identify services, institutions or people where the girl in the story will seek support. Write them down and paste them on the board. The more helpful/accessible the service/people, the closer the sticky note should be placed to the name of the person in the story.
- 4) If possible, take a picture at the end. DO NOT take pictures of the participants.
- 5) Select up to two stories to discuss.

Story 1

Introduction: I’m going to read to you the beginning of a story about a girl in a community like yours. I would like your help in filling out her story with what would happen to her if she were in your community.

Hiwot is 15 years old. Hiwot goes to school and helps her mother with cooking and chores around the house. She’s been hearing from some of her relatives nearby that her parents are talking about arranging a marriage for her. Hiwot is nervous. She wants to keep studying but she does not want to go against her parents. She is not sure if she is ready to get married and she knows that she is not ready to have children.

- Q. How would Hiwot feel about her parents arranging a marriage for her?
- Q. What would Hiwot do next?
- Q. Should Hiwot talk to the boy that her parents want her to marry? What is his responsibility to her?
- Q. Who might talk to Hiwot about contraception?
- Q. What do you think will happen to Hiwot?
- Q. How would this situation change if Hiwot were a boy?

Story 2.

Introduction: I'm going to read to you the beginning of a story about another girl in a community like yours. I would like your help in filling out her story with what would happen to her if she were in your community.

Tigist is 19 years old. Tigist has been married for six months. She's excited about having entered a new phase in life and getting started as a married woman. Her husband makes pretty good money, but Tigist thinks that if she could work, her new family's situation would be a lot easier. Her relatives are teasing her about when she is going to give them a child. Tigist thinks a child might be nice, but Tigist isn't sure what to do.

Q. What would Tigist do next?

Q. Should Tigist talk to her husband about her concerns? What might she say?

Q. What are her husband's responsibilities to support her emotionally or financially?

Q. Who might suggest to Tigist that she use contraception to delay child-bearing?

Q. Will Tigist go anywhere to get help? Will she try to access any services? If so, what are they?

Q. What do you think will happen to Tigist?

Q. How would the situation change if Tigist and her husband already had a child and did not want a second child?

Story 3.

Introduction: I'm going to read to you the beginning of a story about another girl in a community like yours. I would like your help in filling out her story with what would happen to her if she were in your community.

Ayne is 18 years old. After studying very hard in secondary school, Ayne moved to the city to study at university. Ayne has been enjoying the freedom of living in the city, but she knows her parents want her to stay focused on her studies. Ayne has been seeing a slightly older university student named Berhanu for a few months. Recently he's been talking about getting more serious about being with Ayne. Ayne isn't quite sure what he means and what he expects.

Q. What would Ayne do next?

Q. What do you think Ayne's boyfriend wants from her?

Q. Should Ayne and her boyfriend talk about sex? About contraception?

Q. How might Ayne's boyfriend support her? What is his responsibility toward her?

Q. What do you think will happen to Ayne?

Q. How would the situation change if Ayne and Berhanu had already had sex?